



# Discovering Darwin's Inspiration

## GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

January 3–15, 2015

### ITINERARY

**\*\*\* The following itinerary information is tentative and subject to change \*\*\***

2015	
<b>Day 1</b>	
3-Jan Sat	Depart USA
<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Arrive in Baltra transfer- San Cristobal</b>
4-Jan Sun	Arrive Baltra, Galapagos Islands, group airport transfer upon arrival Transfer to San Cristobal Island Lunch Transfer from SYC Dock to hotel Group dinner/ Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 3</b>	<b>San Cristobal, activities with Universidad de San Francisco de Quito (USFQ )</b>
5-Jan Mon	Breakfast at hotel AM Visit to Darwin Interpretation Center and Frigate Bird Hill, with Darwin discussion Lunch PM Class on campus Dinner/ Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 4</b>	<b>San Cristobal, activities with USFQ</b>
6-Jan Tues	Breakfast at hotel AM Isla Lobos excursion for wildlife observation and discussion of animal behavior Lunch and snorkeling opportunity PM Class on campus Dinner/Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 5</b>	<b>San Cristobal</b>
7-Jan Wed	Breakfast at hotel AM guided visit to Highlands of San Cristobal and Laguna El Junco Lunch included Afternoon local activities Dinner/discussion Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 6</b>	<b>San Cristobal / Santa Cruz</b>
8-Jan Thurs	Breakfast at hotel AM Transfer to Santa Cruz Island PM Visit to Santa Cruz Highlands, including: Visit to the Twin Craters, Galapagos tortoise viewing in natural habitat, and lava tunnels Lunch at local farm Dinner/discussion Overnight selected hotel

<b>Day 7</b>	<b>Santa Cruz</b>
9-Jan Fri	Breakfast at hotel Day Trip to Tortuga Bay Dinner/ Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 8</b>	<b>Santa Cruz</b>
10-Jan Sat	Breakfast at hotel Full Day North Seymour Island visit including lunch on board the Santa Fe boat Dinner/discussion Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 9</b>	<b>Santa Cruz</b>
11-Jan Sun	Breakfast at hotel AM local activities Lunch PM Activity - Visit to the Charles Station with Guide Dinner/ Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 10</b>	<b>Santa Cruz</b>
12-Jan Mon	Breakfast at hotel Half Day Las Palmas and Nameless islands excursion – private charter (snorkeling/fishing options) PM local activities Dinner/discussion Overnight selected hotel
<b>Day 11</b>	<b>Santa Cruz</b>
13-Jan Tues	Breakfast at hotel Full Day Santa Fe Islands excursion including Lunch on board the Santa Fe Boat Farewell Dinner Overnight selected hotel
	<b>Santa Cruz / Baltra / Home</b>
14-Jan Wed	Breakfast at hotel Group transfer to airport for flights home

## TOUR HIGHLIGHT DESCRIPTIONS

**(please note that all of this information is tentative and will be updated once the number of participants is confirmed)**

### Universidad San Francisco de Quito (USFQ) Galapagos Extension Campus Programs

Programs to be coordinated in conjunction with USFQ tentative programs will include a visit to the Darwin Interpretation Center, Frigate Bird Hill and a Darwin discussion, a full day excursion to Isla Lobos with wildlife observation and discussion of animal behavior, as well as a tour of the local campus and a class on campus. SUNY Cobleskill faculty will be able to coordinate with the faculty from USFQ to finalize the academic component with the support of Destination Partners.



## Highlands of San Cristobal & Laguna El Junco

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Laguna El Junco is a miraculous fresh water lake, the largest fresh water preserve in the entire



Galapagos archipelago. It was formed in the middle of the Pacific Ocean in the crater of a now-extinct volcano in the highlands of San Cristobal. Just a short drive from the Galapagos Eco-Lodge, the lake boasts some of the most dramatic greenery in the island system and is home to a large population of bird life. The hike to El Junco provides the opportunity to climb up the sides of this extinct volcano. From your spectacular vantage point you may see many of the endemic bird species including Galapagos mockingbirds, pintails, moorhens, pied-billed grebes and frigate birds swooping down to the water to fish. The trail is abundant with flora and fauna. The view from the 2400 foot summit will take your breath away. While visiting the highlands you also will be treated to the

remarkable view of San Cristobal Island's Eastern shore including Punta Pitt, Puerto Chino and El Pescador.

## Santa Cruz Highlands Visit

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Following the group's arrival in Baltra take a short ferry crossing to Santa Cruz Island (10-minute ride). On your way to Puerto Ayora you will stop in the highlands of Santa Cruz Island which offer a lush contrast to the beaches and arid lowlands found elsewhere on the island. With one of our Naturalist Guides as your escort you will visit some of the highlights of the 'Parte Alta'.

A stop at the twin craters Los Gemelos is one of the first sights on your highlands tour. These two large pit craters along the road from Puerto Ayora to Baltra were caused by the collapse of empty magma chambers.

A visit to the Fortiz farm, provides the opportunity to marvel at the celebrated Giant Galapagos Tortoise roaming in its natural habitat. You can also explore a cavernous underground Lava Tunnel where you can view one of the geological wonders of our volcanic islands. After having lunch at one of the farms in the area, you will be transferred to Puerto Ayora (4 minutes drive) to your hotel.



## Charles Darwin Station

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The Charles Darwin Station is a biological research station operated by the Charles Darwin Foundation located on Santa Cruz Island. With a focus on environmental education and scientific research, a customized visit to the Charles Darwin Station is the perfect way to learn about the current research being done on the Galapagos Islands as well as the every changing challenges faced in this unique eco-system.



## Island excursions

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Full and Half day excursions by boat will be coordinated to explore the neighboring islands. Activities will be led by a certified Galapagos Naturalist and will include exploration of the local flora and fauna, nature walks, discussions of conservation issues specific to each island, and other activities specific to the highlights of each island. Optional activities may include snorkeling, kayaking, fishing or swimming.

**North Seymour Island:** A stroll on flat terrain allows the observation of Palo Santo trees and colonies of blue-footed boobies, swallow-tailed gulls and magnificent frigate birds. Towards the other side of the island, the ocean crashes against the rocks and sea lions surf in the waves.

**Santa Fe Island (Barrington):** A short trek leads through woods of Opuntia cacti and Palo Santo trees. Witness land iguanas (endemic to Santa Fe), lava lizards and colonies of sea lions. There is opportunity to swim and snorkel on the Island.

**Las Palmas & Nameless Islands:** Accessible only by boat, you will explore the unique flora and fauna of these islands, as well as having the opportunity for snorkeling and fishing in this pristine environment on your full day private charter accompanied by a certified Galapagos Naturalist.

